

Edmund Pendleton Gaines to Andrew Jackson, August 31, 1817, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL EDMUND P. GAINES TO JACKSON.

Camp Montgomery, August 31, 1817.

General, I regret to be under the necessity of permitting the express, with my letters for the Tennessee mail, to St. Stephens, to depart, without being able to report to you the execution of your Order of the 22nd of April last. But I am still without a word from the Seminola Indians, in reply to my demand for the delivery of the murderers. This silence could not but be construed into a resolution of non compliance, on the part of the chiefs, were I assured that the demand had been faithfully communicated to them; but of this there is some ground to doubt.¹ 23

¹ The expected reply of the Seminoles was received by Major Twiggs at Fort Scott two weeks later and, by him, sent to Brigadier-General Gaines. It was dated Sept. 11, 1817, and was as follows:

“To the Commanding Officer at Fort Scott on Flint River, *Dear sir* Since the last war after you sent word wee must quit the war wee the red people has come over on this side the White people has carried all the red peoples cattle off, after the War I sent to all my people to let white people alone and stay on this side the river and they did so, but the white people still continues to carry off their cattle, Barnads Son was hear and I enquired of him what was to be done, and he said wee must goe to the head man of the white people and complain I did so and there was no white head man and there, nor no law in this case, the white first began and there is nothing said about that but great complaint made about

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what the Indians does, this is now three years since the white people killed three Indians, since that they have killed three other Indians and took their horses and what they had, and this last summer they killed three more, and very lately they killed one more, wee sent word to the white people that these murders were done, and the answer was that they were people that was Outlaws and we ought to goe and kill them, the White people killed our people first the Indians then took satisfaction, there is yet three men that they red people has never taken Satisfaction for, You have wrote that there was houses burnt but wee know of no such thing being done, the truth in such cases ought to be told but this appears otherwise, On that side of the river the white people has killed five Indians but there is nothing said about that, and all that the Indians have done is brought up, all the mischief the white people has done ought to be told to their head man when there is any thing done you write to us but never writes to your head man what the white people does, When the red people sends talk or writes they always send the truth, You have sent to us for your horses, and wee sent all wee could find but there was some dead it appears that all the mischief is laid on this town but all they mischief that has been done by this town is two horses One of them is dead and the other was sent back, the cattle that wee are accused of taking was cattle that the white people took from us, our Youngmen went and brought them back with the same marks and brands, there was some of our Young men out hunting and they were killed others went to take satisfaction, and the kettle of one of the men that was killed was found in the house where the women and two children were killed, and they supposed it had been her husband whoe had killed the Indians, and took their satisfaction there, we are accused of killing up Americans and so on, but since the word was sent to us that peace was made, wee stay steady at home and medles with no person You have sent to us respecting the black people on the sauwanny River, wee have nothing to doe with them, they were put there by the English, and to them you ought apply for any thing about them, wee doe not wish our Country disolated by an enemy passing through it for the Concerns of other people, the Indians has Slaves there also a great many of them, when wee have and appportunity wee shall apply to the English for them but

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we cannot get them now Sir I conclude by subscribeing myself your humble servt. etc. this is what wee have to say at present

“N. B. there is ten towns has red this letter and this is the answer.”

The Mickasukee chief refused to meet in council, but promised to attend to any communication that should be sent to him. This promise, I have no doubt was dictated by the British agent, that the communication should pass through his lands, and be changed or mutilated to suit his own sinister designs. To counteract the effects of this scheme of treachery, and make the deluded Indians sensible of the danger to which this pretended friend and agent is about to lead them, I am satisfied that, it is absolutely necessary to appear *in force* near them. I should indeed have pursued this course some time past, if it had been practicable to procure sufficient transport. . . .